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DENNIS' MOMENT HEAVY 9-5 FAVORITE IN SATURDAY'S IROQUOIS; ALBAUGH 'HOPING HE LIVES UP TO THE HYPE'

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Friday, Sept. 13, 2019) – The most publicized horse on the backstretch of Churchill Downs over the last two months was striking maiden winner **Dennis' Moment**. On Saturday, the 2-year-old colt will see if he can live up to the hype as the 9-5 morning line favorite in the \$200,000 Iroquois (Grade III).

"It's exciting to be right in this horse's backyard for the Iroquois," owner **Dennis Albaugh** said. "It's a big deal to pick up points this early for the Kentucky Derby. That will make things next year a little easier. This horse just amazes me how easy he strides. You look at other horses on the track and then see him, and his stride is just so perfect. He seems to get better every work leading into the race.

"I remember calling (trainer) **Dale (Romans)** a couple days after the race to make sure how he came out of the race and Dale told me 'he was perfect.' I just hope he can now live up to the hype because he could be very special."

Dennis' Moment was purchased in the 2018 Fasig Tipton August sale for \$400,000 following several pre-sale inspections from his team of bloodline experts, Romans and Albaugh's son-in-law **Jason Loutsch**.

"When we did all of the pre-work for the sale, we noticed this Tiznow colt that matched all of the factors we go over in horse's pedigrees," Albaugh said. "All the boxes were checked prior to the sale. We were at Saratoga during the sale but we were actually sitting on the plane getting ready to leave when the horse was going through the ring. We were on the phone with the auctioneers just before we takeoff and luckily we were able to get him."

The 1 1/16-mile Iroquois, one of four stakes events on the first Saturday of the 11-day September Meet, is the first scoring race on the 2019-20 "Road to the Kentucky Derby" – the series of 35 races that will ultimately determine the field for the 146th running of the Kentucky Derby Presented by Woodford Reserve (GI) on Saturday, May 2, 2020. Points awarded to the Top 4 Iroquois finishers will be 10-4-2-1 as part of the 19-race "Prep Season" that showcases foundation-building races in advance of the "Kentucky Derby Championship Series," which begins in late February.

The Iroquois also is part of the Breeders' Cup "**Win & You're In**" program with the winner receiving an automatic berth into the \$2 million Breeders' Cup Juvenile (GI) on Nov. 1 at Santa Anita.

The complete Iroquois field from the rail out (with jockey, trainer and morning line odds): **Zyramid** (Ricardo Santana Jr., Steve Asmussen, 10-1); **Letmeno** (Calvin Borel, Ian Wilkes, 10-1); **Scabbard** (Corey Lanerie, Eddie Kenneally, 5-1); **Rowdy Yates** (Baze, Asmussen, 7-2); **Automate** (Florent Geroux, Keith Desormeaux, 30-1); **Flute Maker** (Jose Ortiz, McPeck, 8-1); **Juggernaut** (James Graham, Desormeaux, 10-1); Dennis' Moment (Irad Ortiz Jr., Romans, 9-5); **Lebda** (Trevor McCarthy, Claudio Gonzalez, 10-1); and **January Won** (Hernandez, McPeck, 15-1).

The Iroquois, which received a \$50,000 boost this year to \$200,000, is carded as Race 10 at 5:26 p.m. (all times Eastern) on an 11-race card that begins at 12:45 p.m.

KENNEALLY CONFIDENT SCABBARD CAN STRETCH OUT IN DISTANCE – **Joseph Sutton's** Saratoga Special (Grade II) runner-up **Scabbard** will stretch out around two turns for the first time in Saturday's Iroquois (GIII) but trainer **Eddie Kenneally** believes the son of More Than Ready can handle the extra distance.

"Even though he's by More Than Ready, he moves like a horse who wants to go around two turns," Kenneally said. "I think the 1 1/16 miles will suit him just fine in the Iroquois. He's been training very forward since running in the Saratoga Special and we had this race in mind since then. Obviously (trainer) **Dale (Romans)**'s horse (**Dennis' Moment**) is a very nice 2-year-old but I think this will be a competitive race."

Scabbard won his career debut by five lengths on June 28 at Churchill Downs under leading rider **Corey Lanerie**. In the Aug. 10 Saratoga Special, Scabbard finished 3 ¾ lengths behind **Green Light Go**, who could be the likely favorite in the Champagne (GI) in early October at Belmont Park.

IT'S ALL IN THE FAMILY FOR IROQUOIS ENTRANT JUGGERNAUT – **Big Chief Racing** and **Rocker O Ranch's** impressive debut winner and Iroquois (GIII) entrant **Juggernaut** comes full circle for trainer **Keith Desormeaux** and assistant **Julie Clark**, who campaigned his dam **Hashtag Stormy**.

Juggernaut broke his maiden impressively at Ellis Park by 6 ¼ lengths under **James Graham** and has already accomplished more on the racetrack than his dam.

"His dam was one of the sweetest horses we've had in our barn," Clark said. "Unfortunately, she had a hind-end injury that forced her to retire early. The thing that makes (Juggernaut) so special is he has so much of her characteristics around the barn. He's an absolute sweetheart, and can run a little bit, too. He's not the biggest horse in the world but was very impressive in his debut."

Juggernaut rewarded his backers at odds of 26-1 in his debut on Aug. 4. The field of 12 included next-out maiden winner and fellow Iroquois entrant **Something Special**.

PORTRAIT, MORNING GOLD CO-3-1 MORNING LINE FAVORITES IN POCAHONTAS – **LNJ Foxwoods'** 12-length maiden winner **Portrait** and **C & R Diamond Racing's** 5 ¼-length maiden victor **Morning Gold** are the co-3-1 morning favorites as they test stakes company for the first time in Saturday's \$200,000 Pocahontas (GII) – the kickoff on the "Road to the Kentucky Oaks."

The Pocahontas will be Race 9 on Saturday's racing program and has a scheduled post time of 4:53 p.m. (all times Eastern).

The 1 1/16-mile race opens the "**Road to the Kentucky Oaks**" points system that will determine the field of 14 for America's premier race for 3-year-old fillies next spring. The Pocahontas offers Kentucky Oaks points on a scale of 10-4-2-1 to its top four finishers.

The Pocahontas also is a Breeders' Cup "**Win and You're In**" Challenge race for the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies, which will be run Friday, Nov. 1 at Santa Anita. The Pocahontas winner will earn an automatic berth in the starting gate for the 1 1/16-mile race for 2-year-old fillies, along with \$60,000 in starting fees and a travel stipend.

Trained by **Brad Cox**, Portrait (2-1-0-1—\$35,000) debuted on the turf at Ellis Park where she finished third as the 8-5 post-time favorite. In her second-career start, Portrait dominated a field of seven 2-year-old fillies at seven furlongs on dirt to win convincingly under jockey **Shaun Bridgmohan**.

"I've been really high on her this summer," Cox said. "I think she's one of our nicest 2-year-olds we have in the barn and she was impressive breaking her maiden last time at Ellis. I think the distance shouldn't be a problem going two turns."

Cox also reported **British Idiom** will likely be scratched from the race.

Among the challengers in the Pocahontas is **C & H Diamond Racing's** 5 ¼-length maiden victor **Morning Gold**, who will attempt to give trainer **Kenny McPeek** a record-tying third victory in the Pocahontas. Morning Gold (2-1-1-0—\$67,500) made her only two starts on turf at Saratoga. McPeek previously won the Pocahontas in 2015-16 with **Dothraki Queen** and **Daddys Lil Darling** and is one win from tying **D. Wayne Lukas**, **Dale Romans** and **Pete Vestal** for the most victories in the race by a trainer.

The field for the Pocahontas, in order of post position (with jockey, trainer and morning line odds): **Shadilee** (Julien Leparoux, Mike Maker, 10-1); **His Glory** (James Graham, Tom Amoss, 20-1); Portrait (Bridgmohan, Cox); **Lazy Daisy** (Abel Cedillo, Doug O'Neill, 8-1); **Blood Curdling** (Corey Lanerie, Dane Kobiskie, 5-1); Morning Gold (Jose Ortiz, McPeek, 3-1); ~~British Idiom (Irad Ortiz Jr., Cox, 4-1)~~; **Lotta Ott** (Ricardo Santana Jr., Steve Asmussen, 8-1); and **Addilyn** (Miguel Mena, Antonio Sano, 15-1).

SATURDAY LATE PICK 5 KICKS OFF WITH AMERICA'S TALE AS 3-1 CHOICE IN OPEN MIND, MYLADY CURLIN 5-2 FAVORITE IN LOCUST GROVE – Saturday's stakes quartet will begin in Race 7 as **Naveed Chowhan's** Inside Information (GII) winner **America's Tale** will return to the races as the 3-1 morning line favorite in the \$125,000 Open Mind (Listed). One race later, **Sather Family's** seven-time winning filly **Mylady Curlin** will attempt to collect her fourth-straight stakes victory as the 5-2 choice in the \$200,000 Locust Grove (GIII).

The seventh race at Churchill Downs kicks off the 50-cent late pick 5 that will feature the two aforementioned races along with the \$200,000 Pocahontas (GII), \$200,000 Iroquois (GIII) and will close with a one-mile maiden special weight for 2-year-olds worth a purse of \$95,000.

In the Open Mind, America's Tale will return following a five-month layoff after finishing fourth in the \$300,000 Madison (GI) at Keeneland. **Jose Ortiz**, the second-leading rider in North America, has the call on America's Tale from Post 7.

Right Time Racing III and **Madaket Stables' Meadow Dance** is likely to scratch in favor of next weekend's \$300,000 Charlestown Oaks (GIII), according to her connections.

The Open Mind field from the rail out (with jockey, trainer and morning line odds): **Divine Queen** (Calvin Borel, Buff Bradley, 7-2); **Upset Brewing** (Gabriel Saez, Bradley, 12-1); ~~**Meadow Dance** (Shaun Bridgmohan, Brad Cox, 6-1);~~ **Honey Bunny** (Florent Geroux, John Ortiz, 8-1); **Headland** (Tyler Baze, Steve Hobby, 9-2); **Awestruck** (Irad Ortiz Jr., Rusty Arnold II, 9-2); America's Tale (Jose Ortiz, Flint, 3-1); and **Ascot Day** (Declan Cannon, Danny Peitz, 6-1).

In Race 8, Mylady Curlin is scheduled to take on eight rivals in the Locust Grove for trainer **Brad Cox**. The well-traveled 4-year-old filly by Curlin enters the race following her victory in Thistledown's \$200,000 Lady Jacqueline Stakes by a scant nose. Previously, Mylady Curlin won the \$100,000 Mari Hulman George Memorial Stakes at Indiana Grand and \$150,000 Allaire DuPont Distaff Stakes (GIII) at Pimlico.

The Locust Grove field from the rail out (with jockey, trainer and morning line odds): **Pink Sands** (Corey Lanerie, Shug McGaughey III, 8-1); **Moonlit Garden** (Florent Georux, Cox, 9-2); Mylady Curlin (Shaun Bridgmohan, Cox, 5-2); **Skeptic** (Julien Leparoux, Rusty Arnold II, 20-1); **Escape Clause** (Tyler Baze, Don Schnell, 3-1); **Cosmic Burst** (Miguel Mena, Donnie K. Von Hemel, 20-1); **Go Google Yourself** (Brian Hernandez Jr., Paul McGee, 3-1); **Red Dane** (Edgar Morales, Charlie LoPresti, 15-1); and **Rose of Malibu** (Jon Court, C.R. Trout, 20-1).

MR. MONEY PUTS IN FINAL MAJOR TRAINING PRIOR TO PENNSYLVANIA DERBY – **Allied Racing Stable's** multiple graded stakes winner **Mr. Money** continued his march toward next Saturday's \$1 million Pennsylvania Derby (GI) at Parx with a spirited two-minute lick early Friday morning at Churchill Downs.

Trained by **Bret Calhoun**, Mr. Money will ride a four-race win streak into the Pennsylvania Derby – the marquee race at Parx Racing located just outside Philadelphia. The son of Goldencents began his win streak at Churchill Downs with convincing victories in the \$400,000 Pat Day Mile Presented by LG&E and KU (GIII) and \$150,000 Matt Winn (GIII) prior to a 2 ½-length win in the \$500,000 Indiana Derby (GIII) and six-length triumph in the \$500,000 West Virginia Derby (GIII).

"It's sure going to be fun seeing some of the best 3-year-olds come together," Calhoun said. "Both sides of the fence, our race looks ultra-competitive and the Cotillion is going to be a heck of a race too."

"This morning we decided just to two-minute lick (Mr. Money) because of how fresh he is and I didn't want to have him go :58 or :59 a week out from the race. He's certainly ready to run."

Mr. Money is scheduled to fly to Parx Wednesday.

OAKS WINNER SERENGETI EMPRESS WORKS HALF IN :48.80 FOR COTILLION – **Joe Politi's** Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI) hero **Serengeti Empress**, who finished a resilient half-length behind **Covfefe** in last month's Test Stakes (GI), logged her final breeze prior to next Saturday's \$1 million Cotillion in :48.80 early Friday morning at Churchill Downs.

Serengeti Empress, the 3-year-old daughter of Alternation, sprung the 13-1 upset in the Kentucky Oaks in wire-to-wire fashion. Trained by **Tom Amoss**, Serengeti Empress is scheduled to fly to Parx Wednesday.

A five-time winner through 10 starts, Serengeti Empress has banked more than \$1.2 million in earnings.

NATION'S TOP JOCKEY IRAD ORTIZ JR. RIDES DENNIS' MOMENT, OTHERS SATURDAY – **Irad Ortiz Jr.**, the nation's leading jockey in money-won with more than \$20.8 million, will be at Churchill Downs on Saturday to ride **Albaugh Family Stables'** promising 2-year-old **Dennis' Moment** in the \$200,000 Iroquois (Grade III).

The 27-year-old native of Puerto Rico, who recently finished second behind his younger brother **Jose** in the Saratoga jockey standings, has seven scheduled rides Saturday at Churchill Downs: **Baby White Sox** (Race 3, Joe Sharp); **Fight Fight Fight** (Race 4, Dale Romans); **Homebred** (Race 5, Mike Maker); **Awestruck** (Race 7-Open Mind, Rusty Arnold); **British Idiom** (Race 9-Pocahontas, Brad Cox); **Dennis' Moment** (Race 10-Iroquois, Romans); and **Sprawl** (Race 11, Bill Mott).

SARATOGA CHAMP JOSE ORTIZ HAS CHURCHILL DOWNS MOUNTS FRIDAY, SATURDAY – New York-based jockey **Jose Ortiz**, who recently collected his third Saratoga riding crown and was the top jockey at Kentucky Downs, has been named to ride in six races on Friday's opening day card at Churchill Downs and another eight on Saturday.

Ortiz, a 25-year-old native of Puerto Rico, guided his Saratoga mounts to 60 wins and \$5.46 million in earnings. He ranks second in the national standings with nearly \$20 million this year, only behind his older brother **Irad Jr.**'s \$20.8 million.

Ortiz's Friday mounts (with race, trainer and morning line odds): **Bajan Cash** (Race 4, Mike Maker); **Art of Law** (Race 5, Bill Mott); **Motu** (Race 7, Kenny McPeck); **Love My Honey** (Race 8, Maker); **Blueridge Traveler** (Race 9, McPeck); and **Fantastory (BRZ)** (Race 10, McPeck).

Ortiz's Saturday mounts: **Napoleon's Empire** (Race 1, Tom Amoss); **Tiny Danza** (Race 3, Rodolphe Brisset); **Shanghai's Dream** (Race 4, Steve Asmussen); **Cardiac Kid** (Race 5, McPeck); **America's Tale** (Race 7-Open Mind, Bernie Flint); **Morning Gold** (Race 9-Pocahontas, McPeck); **Flute Maker** (Race 10-Iroquois, McPeck); and **Maxfield** (Race 11, Brendan Walsh).

Last weekend, Ortiz raided Kentucky Downs to bag the \$1 million Kentucky Turf Cup (GIII) with **Zulu Alpha** (Maker), \$500,000 Kentucky Downs Ladies Turf (GIII) with **Ms Bad Behavior** (Richard Baltas), \$600,000 Dueling Grounds Derby with **Social Paranoia** (Todd Pletcher) and \$350,000 Dueling Grounds Oaks with **Princesa Carolina** (McPeck).

NEXT YEAR'S KENTUCKY DERBY TROPHY TO VISIT WINNER'S CIRCLE SATURDAY – The priceless 14-karat gold trophy that will be presented to the owner of the 3-year-old Thoroughbred that wins the 146th running of the Kentucky Derby Presented by Woodford Reserve on the first Saturday in May will make its first public appearance Saturday when it is displayed in the Churchill Downs winner's circle during the 38th running of the \$200,000 Iroquois (Grade III), which officially kicks off the "Road to the Kentucky Derby."

The Kentucky Derby Winner's Trophy – a prize that is deemed "priceless" by the historic racetrack that presents it and the owners, trainers and jockeys who pursue it – is 22 inches tall and weighs approximately 67 ounces, excluding its jade base. It was hand-crafted from 14-karat gold and green gold over a period of nearly five months by a team led by **Susanne Blackinton-Juaire** and husband **Bill Juaire**. Blackinton-Juaire is a fifth-generation silversmith whose family entered the profession in 1862 – 13 years before the first Kentucky Derby was run in 1875 – and her family has crafted the Kentucky Derby trophy each year since 1975.

The trophy is topped by a 14-karat gold horse and rider and features a pair of horseshoe-shaped wreath handles.

The front of the trophy is adorned by an 18-karat gold horseshoe that, in accordance with racing tradition, is pointed upward. Racing lore holds that the "luck will run out of a horseshoe" that is pointed downward. The Kentucky Derby Winner's Trophy carried such a design from its introduction until 1997 when the horseshoe was turned 180 degrees.

The trophy, accompanied by three smaller sterling silver replica trophies that go to trainer, jockey and breeder, was first commissioned by Churchill Downs and Kentucky Derby legend Col. Matt Winn in 1924 for that year's 50th, or Golden Anniversary, running of the Kentucky Derby.

The trophy's design took on added features for the 75th (1949), 100th (1974) and 125th (1999) renewals of the Kentucky Derby. Each of those trophies included a mantle of "roses" fashioned from rubies and emeralds, along with a horseshoe filled with diamonds. Similar additions are planned for the trophy of the 150th running of the Kentucky Derby in 2024.

Saturday's Iroquois is Race 10 at approximately 5:26 p.m. and the Kentucky Derby trophy is scheduled to arrive in the winner's circle 30 minutes prior.

In addition to the Kentucky Derby trophy, the perpetual Kentucky Oaks trophy will be displayed in the winner's circle during the 51st running of the \$200,000 Pocahontas (GII), which kicks off the Road to the Kentucky Oaks. The Pocahontas goes as Race 9 at approximately 4:53 p.m.

2019 CHURCHILL DOWNS' EIGHT-RACE, \$1.375 MILLION SEPTEMBER MEET STAKES SCHEDULE

Day	Date	No.	Grade	Purse	Stakes Race	Conditions	Distance
Saturday	Sept. 14	51 st	II	\$200,000	Pocahontas	2yo F	1 1/16 M
Saturday	Sept. 14	38 th	III	\$200,000	Iroquois	2yo	1 1/16 M
Saturday	Sept. 14	36 th	III	\$200,000	Locust Grove	F & M, 3 & Up	1 1/16 M
Saturday	Sept. 14	11 th		\$125,000	Open Mind (Listed)	F & M, 3 & Up	6 F
Saturday	Sept. 21	44 th		\$125,000	Dogwood (Listed)	3yo F	7 F
Saturday	Sept. 28	7 th	III	\$250,000	Lukas Classic presented by Budweiser	3 & Up	1 1/8 M
Saturday	Sept. 28	27 th	III	\$150,000	Ack Ack presented by GE Appliances	3 & Up	1 M
Saturday	Sept. 28	42 nd		\$125,000	Jefferson Cup (Listed)	3yo	1 1/8 M (T)

SUPERCARGED PURSES – This year's three-week September Meet will feature a record \$8.314 million in prize money (all purses include prize money from the **Kentucky Thoroughbred Development Fund**) or an average of \$756,000 per day, thanks to robust business from state-of-the-art historical racing machines that debuted one year ago at nearby **Derby City Gaming**.

Last year, an unprecedented \$5.097 million was paid to horsemen for a daily average of \$463,000.

Vice President of Racing **Ben Huffman**'s September Meet condition book offers 109 races and the average purse per race is a whopping \$76,275. When the September Meet was inaugurated in 2013, the average race prize was \$36,690. Last year, the number grew to \$46,758, which was an 8.6% increase from the prior year.

This September, maiden special weight races are worth \$95,000 and allowance races range from \$97,000 to \$105,000.

SEPTEMBER MEET FOLLOWS STRONG SPRING – If the record-breaking Spring Meet at Churchill Downs is any indication, September's lofty purse structure could lure large fields, high-quality participants and bigger payouts for bettors.

This year's Spring Meet, which ran April 27-June 29, attracted a strong average of 8.5 horses per race when prize money grew from \$585,000 daily in 2018 to \$846,000. A record \$32.2 million was paid to horsemen during the popular 38-day stand – a significant 44.7% or \$9.9 million increase from the \$22.2 million paid in 2018.

With increased purses, quality and field size, all-sources wagering on Spring Meet races soared to \$499.8 million, a \$51.0 million jump from 2018's \$448.8 million. The double-digit 11.4% increase marked the fifth straight annual gain in Spring Meet betting from the prior year.

With more horses and stiff competition in each race, the average \$2 win payoff increased 23.8% to \$13.52 and there were double-digit profit gains for bettors in most all other betting pools, including average \$2 Exacta payouts, which were up 49% to a whopping \$108.22.

'CHURCHILL DOWNS TODAY' TO AIR ONE HOUR BEFORE FIRST RACE – “Churchill Downs Today,” the track's daily racing preview program, will air one hour before the first race of the day with on-track and simulcast host **Joe Kristufek**.

Kristufek will preview each of the day's races and will be joined by a collection of fellow TwinSpires.com and Brisnet.com handicapping experts: **Ed DeRosa**, **James Scully**, **Scott Shapiro** and **Brandon Stauble**.

In addition to airing on-track, “Churchill Downs Today” can be seen on TwinSpires.com's Churchill Downs video feed and will be streamed live on Twitter via @twinspires and Facebook via www.facebook.com/twinspires.

‘INSIDE CHURCHILL DOWNS’ AIRS FRIDAYS AT 6 P.M. ON ESPN 680/105.7 – “**Inside Churchill Downs**,” hosted by Churchill Downs Racetrack’s **Darren Rogers** and **Kevin Kerstein** and TwinSpires.com and BetAmerica.com handicapper **Scott Shapiro**, airs Fridays from 6-7 p.m. on **ESPN 680/105.7**. Those outside the Louisville region can listen live via the station website at www.espnloouisville.com.

BETTING MENU FEATURES 20-CENT SINGLE 6 JACKPOT – The September Meet betting menu at Churchill Downs includes the 20-cent minimum **“Single 6 Jackpot,”** which is offered on the last six races each day with a low 15-percent takeout.

The Single 6 Jackpot is paid out only if there is a single winning wager with six winners placed at the required minimum bet value. If there are multiple winning wagers with six winners in the six-race sequence, 90 percent of the net money wagering into the pool will be paid out, and the remaining 10 percent will carry to the Single 6 Jackpot. If there are no tickets with all six winners, 100 percent of the pool will carry to the Single 6 Jackpot.

There will be a mandatory payout on the Sept. 29 closing day program.

ORIGIN OF SEPTEMBER MEET – Inaugurated in 2013 by request from Kentucky horsemen, the three-week September Meet provides area horse owners, trainers and jockeys a viable racing option to compete for ample prize money mainly on dirt during an important time on the racing calendar in advance of the popular Keeneland and Churchill Downs fall meets.

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